

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 XMB-07 EB-11 COME-00 AID-20

TRSE-00 IO-15 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /177 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12487

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ETRD JA CU

SUBJ: US-JAPAN CONSULTATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA - CUBA

REF: A: STATE 130574; B: TOKYO 12306

SUMMARY: FONOFF PLANS TO RAISE ISSUE OF EXIMBANK LOANS TO CUBA AT US-JAPAN CONSULTATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA. FONOFF CONTINUES UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM MITI TO APPROVE SUCH CREDITS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SEPT 21, EMBOFF CALLED ON HEAD OF FONMIN'S SECOND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION, SAKAMOTO, WHO TOOK OCCASION TO DISCUSS UPCOMING US-JAPAN CONSULTATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA.

2. SAMAMOTO BEGAN BY REFERRING TO DR. KISSINGER'S REMARKS DURING HIS SENATE CONFIRMATION HEARINGS TO EFFECT THAT US WOULD TALK WITH OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES ABOUT PROSPECTS OF IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH CUBA. HE THEN SAID THAT JAPANESE SIDE WILL RAISE QUESTION OF CUBA DURING FORTHCOMING BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA (IN WASHINGTON ON OCT 18-19).

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3. SAKAMOTO RECALLED THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMEN, WHEN

PRESSED IN DIET AS TO WHETHER OR NOT GOVERNMENT WOULD APPROVE EXIM BANK LOANS TO CUBA, HAVE ALWAYS RESPONDED THAT THEY WOULD STUDY MATTER CAREFULLY IF ANY CONCRETE PROJECTS SHOULD ARISE. THESE HAVE NOW MATERIALIZED, IN FACT THERE ARE THREE CONCRETE PROPOSALS AND TEN OTHER POSSIBLE PROJECTS. CONCRETE PROPOSALS INCLUDE \$13 MILLION PLANT TO PRODUCE IRRIGATION PUMPS AND DRY CELL BATTERY PLANT.

4. ACCORDING SAKAMOTO, MITI WISHES TO GRANT APPROVAL THIS MONTH FOR EXIM BANK LOANS ON THREE PROJECTS. SAKAMOTO HAD PERSUADED MITI TO HOLD OFF UNTIL JAPANESE HAVE CHANCE TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE IN GENERAL WITH US AT BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA. SAKAMOTO SAID COMBINATION OF COMMERCIAL AND EXIM BANK CREDITS WOULD RESULT IN OVERALL INTEREST RATE OF APPROXIMATELY 7 PERCENT, WHICH IS HIGHER THAN SOME CREDITS NOW EXTENDED TO CUBA BY EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. IN SHORT, FOREIGN MINISTRY DOES NOT SEE ANY PRACTICAL BASIS TO CONTINUE TO OPPOSE EXTENSION OF EXIM CREDITS.

5. DRAWING ON MOST RECENT GUIDANCE (REFTEL A), EMBOFF RECALLED THAT DEPARTMENT HAD PROMISED INFORM GOJ IN ADVANCE IN EVENT THAT CUBA'S FOREIGN POLICY SHOULD EVER CHANGE SUFFICIENTLY TO PERMIT US TO CONSIDER MAJOR SHIFT IN OUR ATTITUDE WISGDRGYRDL TO CUBA. HOWEVER, CASTRO'S RECENT PERFORMANCE AT NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS WAS HARDLY ENCOURAGING. HE ADDED THAT USG APPRECIATED JAPAN'S RESTRAINT RE EXIM CREDITS TO CUBA, AND WE WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO BRIEF FONOFF OFFICIALS ON CURRENT USG VIEW OF CUBAN FOREIGN POLICY ACTIVITIES.

6. COMMENT: DESPITE HIS STATEMENT THAT CUBAN DREDITS ISSUE WOULD BE RAISED DURING CONSULTATIONS WITH US, SAKAMOTO INDICATED SOME HESITANCY WITHIN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU ON THIS POINT. FONOFF APPARENTLY WOULD LIKE TO RAISE CREDITS ISSUE IN HOPES OF GETTING SOME UNDERSTANDING FROM US SIDE, BUT THEY ARE RELUCTANT TO RAISE ISSUE IF WE WILL FLATLY OPPOSE THEM.
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